

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

OTTAWA - CANADA



Published by Authority of the Rt. Hon. C. D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce

Vol. 34 No. 4 (For release 10 a.m., May 4, 1956) Price: \$1.00 per year, 10¢ per copy

PRICE MOVEMENTS

APRIL 1956

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: (1949 = 100) The Consumer Price Index registered a slight gain between the beginning of March and April 1956, moving from 116.4 to 116.6. A year ago it stood at 116.1. Current increases in the Food, Shelter and Other Commodities and Services indexes were more than sufficient to offset a decrease in the Household Operation index. The Clothing index was unchanged. A rise in the Food index from 109.1 to 109.7 followed a series of moderate declines, unbroken since September 1955. A substantial increase in the price of potatoes, together with higher prices for other fresh vegetables, fruits, eggs, coffee and cheese, more than outweighed further decreases for all beef and pork cuts and margarine. The Shelter index advanced from 131.6 to 131.9 as a result of increases in both the home-ownership and rent components. The Clothing index remained unchanged at 108.7 between March and April 1956, as slight increases affecting footwear, men's topcoats and hats, were counterbalanced by scattered decreases for women's spring coats, hosiery and boys' cotton sport shirts. The Household Operation index declined slightly from 116.8 to 116.6. Decreases in most appliance prices and some household supplies more than offset increases for some items of furniture, floor coverings and lawnmowers. The Other Commodities and Services index rose from 119.9 to 120.1 as higher prices were reported for automobile licenses, doctors' and dentists' fees. Prices for radios and some magazines were lower.

Consumer Price Indexes (1949=100)

	Total Index	Food	Shelter	Clothing	Household Operation	Other Commodities and Services
April 1956	116.6	109.7	131.9	108.7	116.6	120.1
March 1956	116.4	109.1	131.6	108.7	116.8	119.9
April 1955	116.1	111.0	128.7	107.9	116.9	118.2

8002-503-46

Prepared in Prices Section, Labour and Prices Division

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WHOLESALE PRICE INDEXES (WEEKLY) The weekly composite index for thirty industrial materials edged downward during April, declining 0.1 per cent from 249.0 to 248.8 in the four-week period from March 30th to April 27th. Declines were noted in price quotations for raw rubber, oats, tin, sisal, hogs, iron ore and pulp sulphite. Fractional weakness in United States funds was a depressant in several instances. Among other commodity changes, the price of steel scrap moved up sharply, followed by lesser increases for steers, raw cotton, raw sugar and wheat.

Canadian farm product prices at terminal markets, in a continuation of the intermittent upward trend apparent in the first three months of this year, again advanced fractionally in April. In the four-week period March 30th to April 27th, the composite index rose 0.9 per cent from 199.3 to 201.0. Field and Animal prices on both Eastern and Western markets were generally higher. The index for Field Products moved up 1.0 per cent from 167.6 to 169.2, reflecting higher prices for potatoes, rye, Western hay and flax, and Eastern corn, barley and wheat. Over the same period, Animal Products recorded an index gain of 0.8 per cent from 231.0 to 232.9, as price increases occurred in eggs, lambs, steers, Western calves, and Eastern poultry and hogs. Declines were registered on Eastern markets for calves, cheesemilk and fluid milk, while in the West, hogs, butterfat and raw wool were lower.

Wholesale Price Indexes (1935-1939 = 100)

	1956 Week Ended					Monthly Average		
	Mar. 30th	Apr. 6th	Apr. 13th	Apr. 20th	Apr. 27th	Apr. 1955	Mar. 1956	Apr. ^P 1956
Industrial Materials	249.0	249.0	248.5	249.3	248.8	233.1	248.8	248.9
Canadian Farm Products	199.3	199.6	199.3	200.4	201.0	216.1	197.5	200.1
Field	167.6	167.6	167.8	168.7	169.2	193.4	164.0	168.3
Animal	231.0	231.6	230.9	232.1	232.9	238.7	231.1	231.9

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SECURITY PRICE INDEXES:
(1935-1939 = 100)

Common stock prices reached a new high in the first week of April as the Investors' Index of 96 issues touched 276.0. Thereafter, an easier tendency was in evidence and in the four-week period, March 29th to April 26th, the index moved down 1.8 per cent from 275.9 to 270.8. Losses occurred in all major groups: 76 Industrials declined 1.7 per cent from 288.9 to 283.9; 13 Utilities 2.5 per cent from 211.7 to 206.5; and 7 Banks 2.0 per cent from 293.9 to 288.1. Decreases in sub-groups were led by Milling, Foods and Allied Products, and Textiles and Clothing, followed by relatively minor losses in all but two of the remaining sub-groups. Pulp and Paper and Power and Traction moved against the trend to register small net increases. Mining stocks were fractionally lower as the composite index declined 0.9 per cent from 138.2 to 136.9, reflecting losses of 1.6 per cent for gold issues from 80.3 to 79.0, and 0.4 per cent in base metals from 270.7 to 269.5.

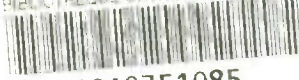
Weekly Security Price Indexes (1935-1939 = 100)

	1956 Week Ended					Monthly Average		
	Mar. 29th	Apr. 5th	Apr. 12th	Apr. 19th	Apr. 26th	Apr. 1955	Mar. 1956	Apr. 1956
Investors' Price Index								
96 Common Stocks	275.9	276.0	272.7	272.6	270.8	216.5	267.9	273.0
76 Industrials.....	288.9	289.3	285.9	285.6	283.9	222.0	280.3	286.2
13 Utilities.....	211.7	210.6	210.7	209.3	206.5	185.6	210.2	209.3
7 Banks.....	293.9	294.2	283.6	288.8	288.1	233.0	276.8	288.7
Mining Stock Price Index								
27 Stocks.....	138.2	138.3	135.0	137.2	136.9	110.2	134.4	136.8
22 Golds	80.3	80.1	78.0	78.3	79.0	71.1	79.4	78.8
5 Base Metals	270.7	271.6	265.4	272.2	269.5	199.8	260.2	269.7
Government of Canada Long-Term Bonds - Yield Index¹	109.7	110.6	111.6	114.2	not avail.	95.2	107.9	112.1 ²

1. Commencing March 29th, yield indexes are based on rates as of Thursday of each week.
2. Average of three weeks.

N.B. Enquiries concerning indexes in this release should be directed to The Prices Section, Labour and Prices Division.

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